MATWATCH

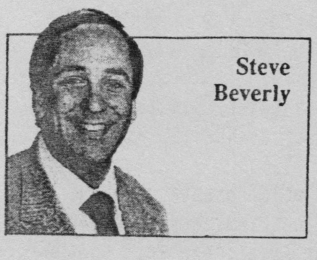
213 Pine Hills Ave. Auburn Al 36830

JANUARY 8-14, 1990 VOL. 2, NO. 29

Before The Annual

MY OWN VOTE FOR THE BEST & REST OF '89

By month's end, your MATWATCH 1989 ANNUAL will hopefully arrive at your door and feature your choices for the 1989 MATWATCH TV AWARDS. Your friendly editor offers you his one ballot with the question: was it a very good year???



Steve Beverly

BEST OF

BROADCAST/BASIC CABLE MATCH: 1. Flair vs. Steamboat, CLASH VI. We may never see a 60-minute draw like this again but every move, style and finish imaginable was used and it was wrestling as the marquee intended. 2. Flair vs. Funk, I QUIT, CLASH IX. 3. Flair/Windham vs. Gilbert/Steamboat, WCW (Jan. 21).

PPV MATCH: 1. Flair vs. Steamboat, CHI-TOWN RUMBLE. To my mind, the best ever and the most intense 22 ring minutes I've ever witnessed. 2. Flair vs. Steamboat, WRESTLE WAR '89. 3. Luger vs. Steamboat, BASH/GLORY DAYS.

NEW CHARACTERS: 1. Theodore R. Long, NWA. If the NWA downgrades him in 1990, they're stupid. 2. Cactus Jack Manson, Various. 3. Skyscrapers, NWA.

COMEDIAN: 1. Terry Funk, NWA. I laughed nearly every time his mug was on screen. 2. Roddy Piper, PORTLAND/WWF. 3. Jim Cornette, NWA.

LIVE TV SUPERCARD: 1. BASH/GLORY DAYS, NWA. After that battle royal, as consistently good as you'll see. 2. WRESTLE WAR '89, NWA. 3. STARRCADE '88, NWA.

PLAY-BY-PLAY: 1. Jim Ross, NWA. His Flair-Steamboat Chicago call alone sewed it up for me. 2. Tony Schiavone, NWA/WWF. 3. Don Coss, PORTLAND.

COLOR: 1. Jesse Ventura, WWF. Still standard, even if the act had few new wrinkles. 2. Michael Hayes, NWA. 3. Cornette, NWA.

WEEKLY SERIES: 1. NWA POWER HOUR, TBS. Some of its early innovations have slipped but overall, the best-edited effort most weeks. 2. PORTLAND. 3. WCW.

TV ANGLE: 1. Funk attacks Flair, WW'89. Maybe it's because I was there live but Terry was a tour de force on this one. 2. Roddy Piper-Nord the Barbarian-Grappler brawl, PORTLAND. 3. Teddy Long fastcounts Road Warriors, CLASH VI.

TV BRAWL: 1. Flair/Sting vs. Funk/Muta, BASH. The best since Eddie Gilbert's famed BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS in '87. 2. Kerry Von Erich/Ricky Morton/Wendell Cooley vs. Japanese Connection/Alan Martin, CWF. 3. Piper-Nord-Grappler, PORTLAND, and Rockers-Brainbusters, WWF (tie).

MEMORABLE TV MOMENT: 1. Hogan blowing cue at NBC MAIN EVENT. I'll not soon forget Hulk looking into the camera after the station break, saying: "I need a cue," then abruptly returing to his grieve-for-Liz act. 2. Funk turning on Flair, WW'89. 3. Tommy Young joining Long in raising Steamboat's hand in victory, CHI-TOWN RUMBLE.

SINGLE PERFORMANCE: 1. Ross, play-by-play of Flair-Steamboat, CHI-TOWN. The best call of a match I've ever heard. 2. Funk, "The Turn of Ric Flair," WW'89. 3. Paul E. Dangerously, final DANGER ZONE, WCW.

TV TURN: 1. Flair, WW'89. Though as a babyface, he didn't draw big money, the turn itself was dramatic. 2. Randy Savage, WWF. 3. Lex Luger, NWA.

RISING STAR: 1. Scott Steiner, NWA. Unless politics screws his career up, he's a can't miss prospect. 2. Great Muta, NWA. 3. Scotty the Body, PORTLAND.

OUTSTANDING TV PERSONALITY: 1. Funk, NWA. His versatility won my vote. 2. Cornette, NWA. 3. Scotty, PORTLAND.

WORST OF

BROADCAST/BASIC CABLE MATCH: 1. Paul Jones vs. Ivan Koloff, CLASH IV: Perhaps the most inept nine minutes in history. 2. Dusty Rhodes vs. Steelman, PWF. 3. Haku vs. Hillbilly Jim, WWF PRIME TIME.

PPV MATCH: 1. Jimmy Valiant vs. Wayne Bloom, SUPER CLASH III. A 27-second squash with Valiant belongs on a PPV like salt on banana pudding. 2. POWW Lingerie Battle Royal, SCIII. 3. Tommy Rich vs. Cuban Assassin, HALLOWEEN HAVOC.

NEW CHARACTER: 1. Mr. Donnie, SCW. Though never directly stated, implications of drug connections with this character were not only unfunny but irresponsible. 2. Dingdongs, NWA. 3. Zeus, WWF.

SUPERCARD: 1. WAR IN THE WINDY CITY, AWA/Sportschannel. When Larry Zbyszko vs. Sgt. Slaughter is your top draw on a "supercard," what's super? 2. HOMECOMING, PWF. 3. ROYAL RUMBLE II, WWF.

WEEKLY SERIES: 1. CHICAGO CHALLENGE: Undeniably the worst-produced half-hour ever and the stench still isn't off my nose. 2. BOBBY HEENAN SHOW, WWF. 3. SOUTHERN CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING.

ANNOUNCER: 1. Ben Masters, SCW. This is actually a three-way tie but Ben gets it by a slip of the tongue. 2. Alan Starr, SCW. 3. Tim Dix, SCW.

(Continued on Page 6)

BLACKJACK, KENDALL FACE FEDERAL CHARGES: STING OPERATION

From Newspaper, TV Reports

TAMPA --- Wrestlers Kendall Windham and his father Robert (Blackjack Mulligan) await arraignment this week on federal charges as part of an alleged counterfeit money ring in the Tampa area which authorities say has drug connections. Both Windhams deny the charges.

WTVT reported last week the ring involves at least nine persons (no other known connections to the wrestling industry) but more arrests could be made. Wire service reports indicate the operation's accused masterminds had printed more than $1.2 million in bogus bills. Authorities accuse both Kendall and Blackjack of buying an undisclosed amount of the bills. One federal agent told WTVT some of the money had been used to purchase drugs. At least $500,000 of the illegal bills had been passed in the area.

News anchor Frank Robertson said undercover agents had been following the case for "several months." A sting operation led to the arrest of Blackjack. Authorities used a hidden video cameras to allegedly record Blackjack with a case of counterfeit $20 bills. All of the nine arrested are charged with selling the bogus money to undercover agents.

One Jan. 3 radio report in the Tampa area erroneously linked idle WWF wrestler Barry Windham to the operation. Barry reportedly posted bond for his father and brother. The two accused Windhams have been free on $25,000 bond each with arraignment expected before a federal magistrate in Hillsborough County this week.

WWF, VIEWER'S CHOICE WAR EXPLODES OVER ROYAL RUMBLE ACCUSATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. --- Executives of eight cable operators which co-own pay-cable distributor Viewer's Choice have blasted World Wrestling Federation pressure tactics during the recent NO HOLDS BARRED: THE MATCH, THE MOVIE PPV event.

The post-movie show, which contained only a nine minute Hulk Hogan/Brutus Beefcake win over Zeus/Randy Savage and 41 minutes of hype for the Jan. 21 ROYAL RUMBLE, mostly Hogan and Gene Okerlund accusing a number of cable operators of "refusing" to carry RUMBLE, was called "an outrage" by Continental Cable senior vice president Robert Stengel.

In an interview with BROADCASTING magazine, Stengel said the Titan accusations were "the most unprofessional thing I've seen in 15 years in the cable business." Continental is a co-owner of Viewer's Choice. The dispute centers around Titan's bypassing of Viewer's Choice as distributor for its 1990 shows and attempting to directly market its PPV events to individual cable systems. Viewer's Choice serves 5.5 million pay homes, 43% of the pay universe, and its parent systems---ATC, Cox, Continental, Comcast, Viacom, Times-Mirror, Newhouse and Telecable will not offer RUMBLE.

WWF senior marketing vice president Basil DeVito called the Hogan comments part of the "hard sell" for RUMBLE. He further estimated 6.2 million pay homes are under contract to carry the event and predicted 8 million by the week of the WWF special from Orlando, Fla.

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

Patrick Mellon, Telecable's programming vice president called the WWF approach "tacky, at best." He said, "Active discussions continue between Viewer's Choice and the WWF but it's unlikely the dispute will be settled by (Jan. 21)."

Stengel said, "Our position is that we want a mid-term to long-term output arrangement with WWF and our approach is through licensing it through Viewer's Choice."

DeVito estimated the buy-rate for NO HOLDS at 2.5% but cable industry estimates place the figure somewhat lower (see MATWATCHINGS, Page 5).

IT'S FOR REAL: FLAIR VS. STING AT WRESTLE WAR '90; LUGER VS. DOC

ATLANTA --- Sting will replace Lex Luger in gaining the NWA world title shot against Ric Flair at WRESTLE WAR '90 in Greensboro, N.C., on pay cable Feb. 25.

The decision reportedly was made at a corporate level, partly based on TBS market research confirming strong young demographic appeal for Sting. Luger also fared well in the same research. The 30-year-old Sting won the STARRCADE '89 contenders' tournament in an upset.

On-air promotion will center around an NWA ruling that Sting gets the shot, based on his STARRCADE victory. Interviews were taped last week in Gainesville, Ga., with Ole & Arn Anderson saying the winner was unimportant, as long as the belt stays with the Horsemen. Luger will publicly contend that he'll be in the world title match, regardless.

Luger will now defend the U.S. title on the show against Steve Williams. No other matches have officially been confirmed. But another newsletter is reporting a possible Steiners vs. Andersons NWA world tag title matchup.

NOTE: Because of work on the MATWATCH ANNUAL, PINFALL PROFILE, I REMEMBER... and ONE YEAR AGO IN MATWATCH will not appear this week.

MATWATCH SUBSCRIPTIONS

(U.S./CANADA) $6 for 7 issues, $19 for 26 issues, $36 for 1 year. (OVERSEAS) $10 for 7, $36 for 26, $65 for 1 year. Payment to: STEVE BEVERLY, 213 PINE HILLS AVE., AUBURN AL 36830.

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale.

(USWA) - VIDEO: "The Further Misdeeds of Billy Travis"; Sweet Ga. Brown d. Naughty Natalie; Chico Torrez d. Tojo Yamamoto; 6-MAN: Chris Adams/Eric Embry/Bill Dundee no contest vs. Billy Travis/Gary Young/Skandor Akbar when brawl erupts after Embry shoves Toni Adams. Chris & Eric get into melee & others join. RESTHOLD.

(SCW) - Nightmare Ted Allen d. John Brewer; Dino Minelli/Billy White d. Chris (Hardball) Walker/Hacksaw Higgins; Joyce Grable/Bambi d. Peggy Lee Leathers/Candi Divine; Kareem Muhammad d. Brett Sawyer; Junkyard Dog d. Joel Deaton. BOMB-PLUS.

(CWA) - [Highlight Show] VIDEOS: Dutch Mantel, Bill Dundee, Travis misdeeds; USWA TAG FINALS: Robert Fuller/Brian Lee d. Jeff Jarrett/Matt Borne; Jeff Jarrett d. The Avenger; Dustin Rhodes/J.J. Funk d. P.Y. Chu'i/Buddy Landell. RESTHOLD.

(AWA/ESPN) - [Key Match]: Yukon John Nord d. Sheik Adnan al-Kaissie plus 4 squashes. BOMB.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: Bad News Brown d. Breakdance Young; Hart Foundation d. Bolsheviks; WWF TAG TITLE: Andre/Haku d. Demolition for belts; Hercules d. John Justice; Dino Bravo d. Reno Riggins; Rockers d. Pat Rose/Orville Hutto; Al Perez d. Brooklyn Brawler; BRO. LUV w. Jake Roberts; Rick Rude d. Mario Mancini. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WWF/SYND.) - [CHALLENGE]: Harts d. Brawler/Conquistador I; Jim Duggan d. Craig Green; Rockers d. Rose/Hutto; Bravo d. Dave Wolfe; REPLAYS: Andre/Haku vs. Demolition, Bravo-Warrior angle from SUPERSTARS. RESTHOLD.
[SUPERSTARS]: Brutus Beefcake d. George South and after when Rick Martel is "modeling," Beefcake grabs Rick's raincoat and chops it up w. clippers; REPLAY: Andre/Haku vs. Demolition, Bravo-Warrior angle; Koko B. Ware d. Alan Martin; Curt Hennig d. Mark Reagan; Big Bossman d. Larry Fontana; Bushwackers d. Mike Sharpe/Chris Williams; Honky Tonk Man/Greg Valentine d. Paul Roma/Jim Gorman. BRO. LUV w. 5 managers, who all argue. DRAW.

(ICW) - Bob Orton Jr. d. Chris Michaels; Ray Oddyssey d. Reed; SEGMENT: Dennis Condrey; Vic Steamboat d. Phil Campbell; Dynamic Duo vs. Undertakers ends in brawl. RESTHOLD.

(NWA/SYND.) - [NWA PRO]: Tommy Rich/Ranger Ross d. Rick Fargo/Rip Rogers; DOOMED d. Bill Bell/Agent Steel; Dynamic Dudes d. Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker/Joe Cruz; Freebirds d. Gene Ligon/Trent Knight; Brian Pillman d. Kendall Windham; Arn Anderson d. Italian Stallion. BOMB-PLUS.
[WORLD WIDE]: Pillman d. Galaxian Davis; Wild Samoans d. Bell/Fargo; Midnight Express d. Steel/Knight; Norman d. Cruz; NWA WORLD TITLE: Ric Flair d. Eddie Gilbert. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

TV TEMPO
Jan. 1-7

(NWA/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Z-Man d. Galaxian Davis; (From WWW): Pillman d. Cactus Jack Manson; Andersons d. N.Z. Militia; WNN: Gordon predicts NWA world title to change hands in '90; PUNK'S GRILL: WOMAN threatens Norman & Terry has her banished from set. RESTHOLD...only for Pillman-Manson. Everything seemed flat this week & WOMAN dragged down the GRILL.
[WCW]: Steiners d. Fargo/Rose; Midnight Express d. Paul Drake/Nasty Ned Brady; Norman d. Bob Cook; Buzz Sawyer/Dragonmaster d. Rick Ryder/Ricky Nelson; Pillman/Zenk d. State Patrol; Royal Family d. Sean Regal/Larry Santo; New Skyscrapers d. Steel/Randy Harris; Dudes d. Cactus Jack/Lee Scott & Cactus beats up Scott after. Then, Scott demands a match vs. Cactus next week; Cactus then beats up Agent Steel, who's scheduled to face Tommy Rich. Tommy d. Cactus; Steve Williams d. Hacksaw Higgins; Wild Samoans d. Brodie Chase/Italian Stallion; Arn Anderson/Sting d. Galax- ians; PWI AWARDS: Bill Apter honors Scott Steiner (MOST IMPROVED WRESTLER), Flair (WRESTLER OF THE DECADE, WRESTLER OF THE YEAR) & Gordon Solie (EDITOR'S AWARD). RESTHOLD-PLUS.
[MAIN EVENT]: (NWA WORLD TITLE) Flair d. Bobby Eaton; Dudes d. Royal Family; ANGLE: WOMAN slaps Norman and slams his "portrait" down. DRAW-PLUS.

(PWF) - All squashes. No specifics...simply told by Ron Lemieux it was one of the worst shows in history. BOMB.

(N. AMERICAN) - Pez Whatley/Rocky King d. Stormtroopers by DQ when Ivan Koloff & Nick Busich run in but the Armstrongs save; The Gladiators d. Brett Sawyer/Eliminator; Mr. Wrestling I & II d. Ric Conners/Bill Russell; Brad Armstrong d. Nicholas (The Czar) Busich by DQ when Uncle Ivan runs in before Bullet Bob saves; Manny Fernandez d. Dixie Rebel; Uptown Rockers d. Sheik Weingeroff/Stomper Harris. RESTHOLD.

(LUCHA LIBRE/W.I.N.) - Eddie Guererro/Mr. Pepto d. Tim Talltree/El Gran Immigre; Bobby Bradley/Capitan Oro d. Crazy #33/Bonzai; Lazertron/Mario Valenzuela d. Mercenaries; Chavo Guererro d. Principe Indu; Gran Markus Jr./Chacal Rivera d. Conan/Rey Misterio; Ari Romero/Pirata Morgan d. Jalisco/The Superstar. DRAW-PLUS.

(LADIES P.W.A.) - Masked Goddess (Candi Divine) d. Jan Flame; INSIDE THE LPWA: World champion Susan Sexton; Locomotion no contest vs. Nasty Girls (Kat LeRoux/Linda Dallas); KEN RESNICK'S PENTHOUSE: The Rappers; STREET CORNER: Adrian Street w. Linda; HOLD-OF-THE-WEEK: Brad Rheingans demonstrates fireman's carry; Desert Rose Sheba d. Medusa Miceli by countout when Medusa chases Sheik Adnan al-Kaissie; Misty Blue Simmes d. Sexton by DQ for over top. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Jerry Lawler, CWA: "(Bill) Dundee's the biggest nothing since the invention of the zero." 2. Jesse Ventura, WWF: "I know a lot about hair, McMahon. I've lost more than you've ever had on your head." 3. Samuel F. Kent, SCW, on why he gave Boni Blackstone one color of makeup: "One color's all you wear and three inches thick." 4. Lawler,

to King Cobra: "Cobra, we're glad to see you're back. Especially after seeing your front." 5. Michael Hayes, WCW: "Don't ever forget: there's not two...there's 4 Freebirds." 6. Jim Cornette, PH: "My hotel room in Peoria was so small, THEY stole MY towels." 7. Bobby Heenan, PTW: "I keep Sapphire's picture in my window. It keeps burglars away." 8. Kevin Sullivan & Jim Ross, WCW: (KS) "I want to be just like you when I grow up, Jim." (JR) "I don't know if that's such a good idea." 9. Ventura, WWF, on Beefcake wearing Martel's tattered coat: "He looks like he's in the soup line with the homeless." 10. Lawler, CWA: "Anyone would look good to Dundee. Ever see his old lady?"

11. Lawler, CWA, to Dave Brown: "I started to say you're two-faced but if you were, you wouldn't be wearing that one." 12. Tony Rumble, ICW, on Vic Steamboat: "He's seen one too many bamboo huts." 13. Vince McMahon & Ventura, WWF: (VM) "Jesse, you're always so spaced out." (JV) "If I'm so spaced out, maybe you'd like to see a moon." 14. Jake Roberts, PTW, to Bro. LUV: "No doctor can give new life and you don't walk on water." 15. Lawler, CWA: "Chris Champion don't know a wristlock from a wristwatch." 16. Theodore R. Long, WCW: "When Sid Vicious recovers, who knows? I might have a job for him." 17. Cornette, WCW, on Sid being replaced: "If a horse breaks a leg, you shoot it." 18. Ross, WCW: "The Samoans' coconut milk they drink is probably spiked, knowing Sir Oliver Kahuna." 19. Cornette, PH: "Spend the weekend with TBS, spend it with me. Just don't spend it in Peoria."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Ventura, WWF: "The average intelligence of Huntsville is about 10 points lower than Luke & Butch." 2. Heenan, WWF, to Sherri Martel: "Sweetheart, go get some new makeup." 3. Long, WCW: "Sid Vicious has ALREADY been replaced!" 4. Ventura, WWF, on Beefcake cutting Martel's coat: "He ought to do that with one of your suits." 5. Ric Flair, WCW: "I made it through the '80s. Nobody controls this sport."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Heenan, PTW: "What is the Royal Rumble? Isn't that when Lady Di has too much chili?"

NICKNAME OF THE WEEK - GEN. MANUEL NORIEGA'S FAVORITE TAG TEAM (Cornette on M Ex).

WORST LINE - Gene Okerlund, WWF: "Beefcake's quite a cut-up."

BEST PICTURES - 1. WWF, Butch Miller licking a baby. 2. PH, Pillman being railed by Cactus Jack. 3. WCW, Pillman double kick on State Patrol.

INFLATION AWARD - Kevin Sullivan, WCW: "Tommy Rich is the Comeback Wrestler of the Year."

DREADED GLITCH AWARD - TBS, Sullivan's mike not open during initial commentary on WCW.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - Kevin Sullivan, TBS: "...Katie bar the door."

BOO AWARDS - 1. USWA, for another brawl starting as a result of Toni Adams being shoved around, this time by Eric Embry. 2. NWA, for trying to pass off Hacksaw Higgins as a big-time Asian champion on WCW. Who are we kidding, guys, when he was at a SCW taping the week before? 3. Vince McMahon, WWF, for sounding like he was regurgitating mucus in calling the opening billboard on SUPERSTARS. Vince, I know it's your style but Saturday was just too much.

TUBE TALK

Washington's WJLA\sportscaster Kevin Kiley reported New Year's weekend Hulk Hogan would retire after the Feb. 23 NBC prime time MAIN EVENT. He quoted unnamed sources but Titan denies....USWA is offering stations USWA LIVE!, a live pickup of the Sportatorium Saturday morning matches. The 52-week deal begins in April for Saturdays at 10 a.m. (EST). Stations would still have an option of a taped edition.... CWF still in reruns. Paul E. Dangerously was scheduled to have taped new wraparounds for the Gilbert/Paul E. shows last Wednesday but I haven't confirmed....USWA is claiming to have gained all of the old CWF stations but I know that's not true in Dothan.

Cactus Jack is doing a monster job as the crazy heel but they need to let him get a significant NWA win....The angle with Lee Scott doing an angry interview over being destroyed by Cactus was funny, particularly during the Cactus-Rich match when the crowd yelled, "We want Lee!"....The Beefcake-Martel angle was a key example of a non-violent one that got over big with the WWF fans.

Don't know about you, but PRIME TIME lacked something without Piper....Don't read anything into Michael Hayes tipping that line about 4 Freebirds. Michael apparently just thought it was funny. Buddy & Terry aren't booked in....The WWF Bossman and Warrior turns or impending have a lot of folks buzzing....Florida's Sunshine Network will now carry a weeknight lineup of: CWF (Mon.), ICW (Tues.), PWF (Wed.), New Japan Superpowers (Thu.), LPWA (Fri.)....The LPWA show is produced by Tor Berg, who also syndicates Inoki's show. We included results because we were told this was more of a standard ladies' wrestling show, not a GLOW or POWW. Ken Resnick & Sgt. Slaughter are the hosts. Sarge wears a toupee....Until next week, remember the famous words of Prof. Archie Lloyd & Bo Diddley: "Don't let your mouth write no check your tail can't cash."

MATWATCH ANNUAL

This is the final week the MATWATCH 1989 ANNUAL: THE DECADE THAT CHANGED IT ALL will be available for $10.00 in the U.S. and Canada and $18 overseas. After Jan. 15, the cost jumps to $12 (U.S./Canada) and $20 (Overseas) as we will have to special order a second run from our printer for any additional copies.

The annual will include an eight-page profile on our MAN OF THE YEAR, the 1989 DAN GIBSON MATWATCHER OF THE YEAR, my forecast for the 1990s, 25 TV EVENTS WHICH SHAPED THE DECADE, a WRESTLING TV LOG, cartoons and the 1989 MATWATCH TV AWARDS as voted on by you the readers. Check, cash or money order to: STEVE BEVERLY, 213 PINE HILLS AVE., AUBURN AL 36830. Please specify if it is an annual order.

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TEXAS SHOOTOUT: Here is most of the card for the CLASH X special from Corpus Christi Feb. 6 on TBS: A 6-man cage match: Sting/Flair/Arn Anderson vs. Muta/Dragonmaster/Buzz Sawyer; NWA world title vs. masks, Steiners vs. Doomed; Steve Williams vs. Samoan Savage; Cactus Jack Manson vs. Mil Mascaras; Road Warriors vs. New Skyscrapers; Kevin Sullivan vs. Norman with pinfalls counting anywhere in the building.

LOOKING AHEAD: With some of the on-air clues being hinted about Sting??? Fourth Horseman??? Does this 6-man in a cage not bring back deja vu of Dusty Rhodes, Flair and the Andersons in 1985? Or Dusty with Ole & the Assassins in 1981? Mascaras is being brought in to draw the Mexican fans and Cactus will carry him to a fine match but why not Conan or some of the other hot LUCHA LIBRE stars?

CALLING AN Rx: Expect Doc to finally get the big push he's merited for some time and don't be surprised if he goes heel without an invisible turn by springtime.

HEELING WARRIOR: One report that Hulk Hogan will take on Ultimate Warrior in a scientific match at WRESTLEMANIA has no apparent basis. I'm expecting a Hogan-Warrior matchup in Toronto but with the third turn of a major supporting babyface in the last four years pre-WM. And while I think the match will draw big money, long term I see it as a risk.

NO HART AT ALL: Gary Hart has been fired by the NWA for undisclosed reasons. That will probably lead to an end to J-Tex Corporation as Muta is scheduled to return to Japan for an extended stay after the CLASH.

GREAT SCOTT: George Scott, Johnny Weaver and Nelson Royal are uniting for a new Carolinas promotion which is skedded to use some of Royal's old ATLANTIC COAST TV outlets. Hart is expected to work for Scott. Bet on the Iron Sheik and Vincent Young showing there, too.

VINCED AGAIN: A source in Titan Sports, which just signed Pat Tanaka to a WWF deal, says the NWA all but had Tanaka set to come in but Vince McMahon aced them out of the deal when he discovered their plans.

CWA STATUS: The latest is that the WMC-TV contract will force Jerry Jarrett to maintain a local show in Memphis but it will only be on in 7 Tennessee-area markets. CWA will be downgraded, according to Andrews Syndication, to a "Class D" program, strictly with minor-league stars training for a berth in USWA.

WE'VE MERGED: Viewers on last week's CWA show were told by host Michael St. John that the promotion had "merged" with USWA. Conflicting stories are originating: one, which we reported that Memphis-Nashville-Louisville will run once a month, but another, which surfaced last week is that Memphis will continue to run weekly with the lesser talent and perhaps one or two USWA-level matches.

RANDALL'S STORY: Clayton County, Ga., authorities have filed a report on the alleged kidnaping of Atlanta TV wrestling host Randall Brown. Last week, Brown told MATWATCH the alleged attack occurred near suburban Atlanta's Old National Highway and denied any hoax in the case.

MATWATCHINGS

MISSY WAITS: Missy Hyatt's anticipated move to co-host NWA MAIN EVENT has been placed on hold. She's been taking speech lessons but apparently, Ric Flair didn't know of the plans and was ired when he read it in another newsletter.

CALGARY CLOSEUPS: Stampede has shut down both TV and live shows until at least March. A dispute between the Harts and TV syndicator Fred May has led to May picking up the Winnipeg shows of Tony Condelo (top stars Ken Patera, Sheik Adnan al-Kaissie, Baron Von Raschke). Some observers say Stu Hart's smartest move would be to forge an alliance with Turner and try to get on new outlets in Canada but Stu still doesn't want to risk his income as agent for the WWF Western Canada shows.

TV TITLE: Lest you forget, the Arn Anderson-Great Muta NWA TV title match Friday night on NWA POWER HOUR will be worth watching. You may have already read the outcome elsewhere but take my word for it---just watch.

SEEING SID: Latest word is that Sid Vicious won't be able to return to WCW until April, although speculation is Vicious may extend his recovery from a punctured lung in hopes of a big-money offer from Titan. If indeed he returns to WCW, Sid will likely be a babyface and go against the New Skyscrapers (now joined by Mark Carswell [Master of Pain]). Also, expect Nord the Barbarian to get another NWA look-see.

LATE MAIN EVENT: Effective this past Sunday night/Monday morning, the syndicated NWA MAIN EVENT with Lance Russell began a night-owl airing on TBS. It will be every Monday morning at 3:30 a.m. (EST)/12:30 a.m. on the West Coast.

NETWORKING: NWA has lost its WORLD WIDE slot on WLFL in Raleigh (10 a.m. Saturdays) and now only has a 1 a.m. Sunday slot for NWA PRO on WRAL. USWA is also gone in Raleigh and WWF has been off WLFL since fall and Columbus, Ga.'s WLTZ has pre-empted SUPERSTARS five weeks in a row.

RALEIGH RALLY: NWA drew 4,300, its biggest crowd in 18 months, in Raleigh last Friday. Sting and Luger had one of their better matches (double countout) with good heat and Eddie Gilbert actually scored a pin in his team match with Tommy Rich vs. the Royal Family (formerly N.Z. Militia).

THIRD TIME A CHARM?: The Rock & Roll Express got a big pop at both the Gainesville, Ga., syndicated and TBS Center Stage tapings last week.

BUY-RATES: It appears the buy-in for the NO HOLDS BARRED/cage match PPV will fall around 1.6% for the four showings, or a gross of $2.3 million, despite Titan's usual inflated estimates (see related story on Page 2). STARRCADE figures are holding firm at 1.8% or a $4.9 million gross.

NEW NWA SEGS: Expect to see some shifting of NWA segs. FUNK'S GRILL goes to WORLD WIDE. FREEBIRDS' FOLLIES with Michael Hayes bows in on POWER HOUR and Joe Pedicino becomes THE FAN'S MAN with on-location bits.

HOLLYWOOD HEAVIES: Broadway Danny Wolf and Dan Farren have lined up the New Olympic Auditorium in L.A. for their Hollywood Heavyweight Wrestling show later this month.

STEVE BEVERLY

(Continued from Page 1)

COLOR: 1. Joe Blanchard, AWA. Listening to hopelessly miscast Joe on ESPN made even Robert Gibson sound exciting. 2. Sherri Martel, ROYAL RUMBLE. 3. Jonathan Holliday, CWF.

TV ANGLE: 1. Flair-Funk plastic bag attack, CLASH VIII. Its implications for kids have been well-documented. 2. Toni Adams attacked by Devastation, USWA. 3. Beauty & the Beast attacks on Linda Street, CWF, and Hogan atomic dropping Sherri, SUMMER SLAM (tie).

TV TURN: 1. Steve Williams, NWA. The "invisible" turn in Japan was about as weak as the invisible heel turn the previous fall. 2. Road Warriors babyface return, NWA. 3. David Sammartino, SCW.

DECLINING STAR: 1. Eddie Gilbert, NWA. In no way because of any deterioration in this man's ring ability but for unadulterated, stupid office politics. 2. Paul E. Dangerously, NWA. 3. Blue Blazer (Owen Hart), WWF/Stampede.

TV MUSIC: 1. AMERICAN DREAM, WWF. I don't know what's worse---hearing the song or watching Dusty dance to it. 2. AWA Theme. 3. Vincent Young's breakdance music, NWA.

WORST IDEA: 1. Abuse of women, WWF/CWF/USWA. Abominable examples all and far too sustained. 2. Plastic bag angle, NWA. 3. HEENAN SHOW, WWF.

WORST TV PERSONALITY: 1. Mr. Donnie, SCW. Bringing this guy into Southern alone should have been enough to keep Tommy Rich out of the NWA. 2. Leon Spinks, CHICAGO CHALLENGE. 3. Iron Sheik, NWA.

I wonder how many arguments have started with me over this. As can be seen, the NWA dominates a lot of my BEST OF...votes but also garnered many more of my WORST OF... choices than in 1988. Order the annual and find out how all of you collectively voted.

RATINGS RAP

CABLE

Week Ending Dec. 25	Rating	Share	Homes
NWA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 12/23)	3.3	6.6	1.67 mil.
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 12/25)	2.6	4.5	1.26 mil.
NWA MAIN EVENT (TBS 12/24)	2.5	5.9	1.27 mil.
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 12/24)	2.1	5.4	1.02 mil.
NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 12/22)	1.8	3.1	915,000
NWA POWER HOUR (Replay) (TBS 12/23)	0.7	5.7	355,000

Week Ending Jan. 1	Rating	Share	Homes
NWA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 12/30)	3.4	6.5	1.72 mil.
NWA'S GREATEST HITS '89 (TBS 12/31)	2.7	4.9	1.37 mil.
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 1/1)	2.7	4.0	1.31 mil.
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 12/31)	2.0	4.7	970,000
NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 12/29)	1.8	3.5	915,000
NWA POWER HOUR (Replay) (TBS 12/30)	0.8	7.5	406,000

SYNDICATION

Week Ending Dec. 10	Rating	Stations	Pct. U.S.
WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION	9.2	236	96%
THE WRESTLING NETWORK (NWA)	5.1	166	92%

(ANALYSIS: Syndication numbers are running behind because of holiday calculation delays. The only key story is NWA dropping below a 6 for the first time in two months.

On cable, WCW is on a tremendous roll, having led the pack for eight consecutive weeks and ALL-AMERICAN, though facing NFL playoff competition New Year's Eve, has sharply dropped from summer highs, indicating probable rejection of the Gene Okerlund/Hillbilly Jim team. The PRIME TIME ratings were quite solid with the Piper-Santa Claus angle and followup, considering low viewing levels on Christmas Eve and bowl opposition New Year's night.

POWER HOUR has dropped back under a million homes for the first time since late October but the 12/29 show didn't start until 11:05 p.m. (EST). A side note: the Sting-Luger bout on 12/23's WCW peaked at a 3.7 rating and 7.8 share, top numbers for any single WCW match during 1989.

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